Passage of Indian Wheat *Via* Pakistan

833. SHRIABANI ROY:
DR. DASARINARAYANA RAO:
SHRISOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) Whether Pakistan has stopped the passage of Indian Wheat and other relief materials through its territory to Afghanistan under UN aid to Afghanistan;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the grounds on which Pakistan denied India to provided transit facilities;

(c) whether the wheat was infested with germs and diseases; if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the action taken by Government in this regard and whether India has now decided to send wheat *via* Iran?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) to (d) As part of our commitment to ameliorate the condition to Afghan people the government has committed to offer humanitarian assistance to internally and externally displaced Afghans, and others in need, including through provisions of one million tonnes of wheat. Government has been in touch with various UN agencies, including the World Food Programme and is working out the modalities for sending humanitarian assistance of wheat to the Afghan people as early as possible. As part of Indian UN aid for Afghanistan, the government has not approached Pakistan for transit facility.

There have been reports that Pakistan has not been willing to provide transit facility for this humanitarian assistance claiming alleged infestation and disease.

Government have made it clear that such claims are ill-founded and self-serving. The government is continuing to explore various options in order to send the wheat to Afghan people as early as possible.